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[T.D. 7215, 37 FR 23161, Oct. 31, 1972; 37 FR 23918, Nov. 11, 1972, as amended by T.D. 8308, 55 FR 35594, Aug. 31, 1990]

§ 53.4945-3 Influencing elections and carrying on voter registration drives.

(a) *Expenditures to influence elections or carry on voter registration drives—(1) In general.* Under section 4945(d) (2), the term “taxable expenditure” includes any amount paid or incurred by a private foundation to influence the outcome of any specific public election or to carry on, directly or indirectly, any voter registration drive, unless such amount is paid or incurred by an organization described in section 4945(f). However, for treatment of non earmarked grants to public organizations, see § 53.4945-2(a) (5) and for treatment of certain earmarked grants to organizations described in section 4945(f), see paragraph (b) (2) of this section.

(2) *Influencing the outcome of a specific public election.* For purposes of this section, an organization shall be considered to be influencing the outcome of any specific public election if it participates or intervenes, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. The term *candidate for public office* means an individual who offers himself, or is proposed by others, as a contestant for an elective public office, whether such office be national, State or local. Activities which constitute participation or intervention in a political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Publishing or distributing written or printed statements or making oral statements on behalf of or in opposition to such a candidate;
- (ii) Paying salaries or expenses of campaign workers; and
- (iii) Conducting or paying the expenses of conducting a voter-registration drive limited to the geographic area covered by the campaign.

(b) *Nonpartisan activities carried on by certain organizations—(1) In general.* If an organization meets the requirements described in section 4945(f), an amount paid or incurred by such organization shall not be considered a taxable expenditure even though the use of such amount is otherwise described in section 4945(d) (2). Such requirements are:

(i) The organization is described in section 501(c) (3) and exempt from taxation under section 501(a);

(ii) The activities of the organization are nonpartisan, are not confined to one specific election period, and are carried on in five or more States;

(iii) The organization expends at least 85 percent of its income directly for the active conduct (within the meaning of section 4942(j) (3) and the regulations thereunder) of the activities constituting the purpose or function for which it is organized and operated;

(iv) The organization receives at least 85 percent of its support (other than gross investment income as defined in section 509(e)) from exempt organizations, the general public, governmental units described in section 170(c) (1), or any combination of the foregoing; the organization does not receive more than 25 percent of its support (other than gross investment income) from any one exempt organization (for this purpose treating private foundations which are described in section 4946(a) (1) (H) with respect to each other as one exempt organization); and not more than half of the support of the organization is received from gross investment income; and

(v) Contributions to the organization for voter registration drives are not subject to conditions that they may be used only in specified States, possessions of the United States, or political subdivisions or other areas of any of the foregoing, or the District of Columbia, or that they may be used in only one specific election period.

(2) *Grants to section 4945(f) organizations.* If a private foundation makes a grant to an organization described in section 4945(f) (whether or not such grantee is a private foundation as defined in section 509(a)), such grant will not be treated as a taxable expenditure

under section 4945(d) (2) or (4). Even if a grant to such an organization is earmarked for voter registration purposes generally, such a grant will not be treated as a taxable expenditure under section 4945(d) (2) or (4) as long as such earmarking does not violate section 4945(f) (5).

(3) *Period for determining support*—(i) *In general.* The determination whether an organization meets the support test in section 4945(f) (4) for any taxable year is to be made by aggregating all amounts of support received by the organization during the taxable year and the immediately preceding four taxable years. However, the support received in any taxable year which begins before January 1, 1970, shall be excluded.

(ii) *New organizations and organizations with no preceding taxable years beginning after December 31, 1969.* Except as provided in subparagraph (4) of this paragraph, in the case of a new organization or an organization with no taxable years that begin after December 31, 1969, and immediately precede the taxable year in question, the requirements of the support test in section 4945(f)(4) will be considered as met for the taxable year if such requirements are met by the end of the taxable year.

(iii) *Organization with three or fewer preceding taxable years.* In the case of an organization which has been in existence for at least 1 but fewer than 4 preceding taxable years beginning after December 31, 1969, the determination whether such organization meets the requirements of the support test in section 4945(f)(4) for the taxable year is to be made by taking into account all the support received by such organization during the taxable year and during each preceding taxable year beginning after December 31, 1969.

(4) *Advance rulings.* An organization will be given an advance ruling that it is an organization described in section 4945(f) for its first taxable year of operation beginning after October 30, 1972, or for its first taxable year of operation beginning after December 31, 1969, if it submits evidence establishing that it can reasonably be expected to meet the tests under section 4945(f) for such taxable year. An organization which, pursuant to this subparagraph, has been treated as an organization described in

section 4945(f) for a taxable year (without withdrawal of such treatment by notification from the Internal Revenue Service during such year), but which actually fails to meet the requirements of section 4945(f) for such taxable year, will not be treated as an organization described in section 4945(f) as of the first day of its next taxable year (for purposes of making any determination under the internal revenue laws with respect to such organization) and until such time as the organization does meet the requirements of section 4945(f). For purposes of section 4945, the status of grants or contributions with respect to grantors or contributors to such organization will not be affected until notice of change of status of such organization is made to the public (such as by publication in the Internal Revenue Bulletin). The preceding sentence shall not apply, however, if the grantor or contributor was responsible for, or was aware of, the fact that the organization did not satisfy section 4945(f) at the end of the taxable year with respect to which the organization had obtained an advance ruling or a determination letter that it was a section 4945(f) organization, or acquired knowledge that the Internal Revenue Service had given notice to such organization that it would be deleted from classification as a section 4945(f) organization.

[T.D. 7215, 37 FR 23161, Oct. 31, 1972; 37 FR 23918, Nov. 11, 1972]

§ 53.4945-4 Grants to individuals.

(a) *Grants to individuals*—(1) *In general.* Under section 4945(d) (3) the term “taxable expenditure” includes any amount paid or incurred by a private foundation as a grant to an individual for travel, study, or other similar purposes by such individual unless the grant satisfies the requirements of section 4945(g). Grants to individuals which are not taxable expenditures because made in accordance with the requirements of section 4945(g) may result in the imposition of excise taxes under other provisions of chapter 42.

(2) *“Grants” defined.* For purposes of section 4945, the term “grants” shall include, but is not limited to, such expenditures as scholarships, fellowships, internships, prizes, and awards. Grants